

Members

Rep. Vernon Smith, Chair
Rep. Ralph Ayres
Rep. Duane Cheney
Rep. Ralph Foley
Sen. William Alexa
Sen. Anita Bowser
Sen. David Ford
Sen. John Waterman



CORRECTIONS MATTERS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

LSA Staff:

Mark Goodpaster, Fiscal Analyst for the
Committee
Timothy Tyler, Attorney for the Committee

Authority: 2-5-21-10

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: August 11, 2000
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St.,
Room 404
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Rep. Vernon Smith, Chair; Rep. Duane Cheney; Rep. Ralph Ayres;
Rep. Ralph Foley; Sen. Anita Bowser.

Members Absent: Sen. David Ford; Sen. John Waterman; Sen. William Alexa.

Chairman Smith convened the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

After introductions by committee members, Mark Goodpaster presented a staff report to the committee members. The staff report is included in Appendix A of these minutes.

Chairman Smith and members requested that staff prepare statistics at the next meeting on the following information:

- a comparison of the proportion of African American males to the total of statewide percentage population and the proportion of African American males who are incarcerated in DOC facilities to the total incarcerated population;
- more information on the reasons why correctional officers are resigning from DOC facilities;
- an update on how salaries of correctional officers in Indiana compared to correctional officers in other states

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

Staff from the Department of Correction provided committee members with additional information on the amount and type of preservice training for correctional officers and youth service officers. (Appendix B).

Mark Goodpaster next presented an overview of the second section of the Corrections Evaluation Report. A copy of the overview is included in Appendix C of these minutes.²

Kelsey Kauffman, Open Society Institute:

Ms. Kauffman presented an overview of a report that she prepared titled The Brotherhood: Racism and Intimidation Among Prison Staff at the Indiana Correctional Facility-Putnamville.³ A summary of Ms. Kauffman's testimony is included in Appendix D of these minutes.

Terry Thurman, Director of UAW Region 3:

Mr. Thurman told the committee members that that the UAW does not support or tolerate racist groups in the union. He indicated that these alleged racists are no longer in leadership positions with Unity or the UAW.

Rep. Smith told the committee that members of black caucus are particularly concerned about the issue of white supremacy in state prisons. He announced that he would consider sponsoring legislation concerning the following:

- Prohibiting the wearing or displaying of racist symbols by employees in all correctional institutions.
- Eliminating DOC regulations and practices that punish DOC employees for assisting in investigations of abuse.
- Extending whistle-blower legislation to protect all employees of the DOC.
- Strengthening the Board of Correction and ensure that senior administrators are answerable to that Board.

Keith Beesley, Attorney for the State Personnel Department told the committee members that IC 4-15-10-4 contains a section with an employee bill of rights.

Rep. Smith also asked that Department of Commissioner Ed Cohn appear on the agenda at the next committee meeting and Superintendent of State Police Melvin Carraway at a future meeting.

Roger Myers, First Vice President of the Unity Team 90212:

Mr. Myers told committee members that he has been employed as a correctional officer for 22 years and still does not earn the maximum salary. He also indicated that Putnamville has some officers who receive the same salaries as newly hired officers. Concerning overtime, he told the committee that corrections officers generally work 1,000 to 1,500 hours of overtime each year. Concerning safety issues, Mr. Myers reported that the offender to officer

²This presentation can be viewed at:
<http://www.state.in.us/legislative/interim/committees/cmec.html>.

³A copy of this report can viewed at <http://www.prisonjustice.org/>

ratio was on average 15 offenders to one officer depending on the shift and the assignment.

Mr. Myers also told committee members that he has not observed any of the types of racist tattoos that Ms. Kauffman reported and has not observed any drug trafficking among officers and offenders.

Clerical Noncustody Staff Salaries:

Rep. Smith told the committee members that the following individuals had been invited to appear before the committee to discuss the problems of personnel who are not correctional officers and their salary issues:

- Tamara Wroblewski, Accountant
- Lorretta Kunch, Correctional Counselor IV
- Patricia Dreske, Secretary IV
- Carolyn Pryor, Clinical Pharmacy Aide
- Lucy Fisher, Secretary IV
- Diana Sobkowiak, Store Clerk III
- Kathy Osika
- Kathy Jordan
- Lori Kunsch, Counselor
- Marianne Mccombs
- Cheryl Meyer

Two prepared statements about clerical noncustody staff salaries are included in Appendix E.

Rep. Smith indicated that he also had a letter from Thomas Goodlow, a former Custody Supervisor at Putnamville Correctional Facility. (This letter is included in Appendix F.)

Finally, Rep. Smith announced that at the next meeting at 10 a.m. on September 15 , he requests that Commissioner Ed Cohn be on the agenda to discuss the allegations that were raised at this meeting. In addition, the other topic at this meeting will be community corrections and community transition program.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.